

Dear CCF family,

And I do mean family, because that's what CCF has become to me. It has shaped my whole college experience and who I am as a person thus far. I had very few friends in college until I joined the girls BT core in CCF my sophomore year. Those girls and my corefas (shoutout to Eleah Tercero and Kelsey Valach) turned my year around. All my corefas and core girls after that have been the biggest blessing to me as well. I don't know how I would have gotten through these past years without them and their love. They have been my support system, my cheerleaders, my encouragement and showed me how to love like sisters in Christ. They have showed me God's love through our sweet, deep friendships. I know God exists because of how they have loved me.

CCF also gave me the international core. Through the international core, I have found where I belong. I discovered a passion for international students and a calling in reaching out to them. Every friendship has been extremely bittersweet, especially when it comes to goodbyes, but I wouldn't trade it for the world. There's nothing like sharing fellowship and cultures. These girls (and guys) have helped me learn more about myself and God than I ever could have. I thank God for them.

My only regret is that I didn't find CCF sooner. I wish I met these people and joined this community sooner than my sophomore year. So reach out to the freshmen and everybody in your dorm. You never know if there's a girl in your dorm that's trying to find community in college and just needs you to reach out to them. Then let God do the rest.

My advice is to be as involved and open as possible. From the beginning I have been super involved in my core and it has been extremely worth it. I was able to create deep friendships quicker and hear from God more than I would have through those friendships because I was open to them. Go on SSI. Go to the pizza theos. Get together with your group and dress up for the Christmas party. Go to the spring picnic. Make an effort to bond with your core and get to know the people in your community.

Be open to God at work in your life (I'm still working on that.) I take baby steps in my faith and as I have slowly grown to be more open to God in my life, I have found it is incredibly worth it. I have started to notice God constantly at work in my life. He doesn't promise things will be easy, but he does promise that he will be there to help you through it as long as you let him in. He works in mysterious ways and has good things in store for you.

While I still have a ways to open up and grow in my faith, I want to thank this community for being there for me and helping me do just that. It has provided me with a safe space to explore, question, learn and taught me what discipleship really means. It truly has been a blessing from God.

Sincerely,

MacKenzie Hattrup